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FM AMCONSUL PESHAWAR  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7854  
INFO AMCONSUL PESHAWAR  
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE  
AMCONSUL LAHORE IMMEDIATE  
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AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE IMMEDIATE  
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AMEMBASSY OTTAWA IMMEDIATE  
CIA WASHDC  
NSC WASHINGTON DC  
SECDEF WASHINGTON DC  
JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC  
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TAGS: [MOPS](#) [PTER](#) [PGOV](#) [PK](#)  
SUBJECT: FATA: NO DEAL IN BAJAUR

CLASSIFIED BY: Lynne Tracy, Principal Officer, U.S. Consulate  
Peshawar, Department of State.  
REASON: 1.4 (d)

#### Summary

11. (S) Local press reports that a "four day" ceasefire has been declared in Bajaur appear to be inaccurate. Frontier Corps Commander General Tariq Khan categorically told Consulate on February 25 that there is no deal or ceasefire with militants led by Tehrik-i Taliban (TTP) deputy Faqir Mohammad. General Tariq and FATA Secretariat Additional Chief Secretary (ACS) Habibullah Khan describe Bajaur's militants as on the defensive and looking for some space, possibly to evacuate key figures out of the agency. "Unconditional surrender" remains the government's key demand. General Tariq intends to continue his advance toward the border after a two-day operational pause to reconsolidate forces. The background behind the conflicting information cited in the press reports is unclear. We have no reason to doubt the FC Commander or the FATA ACS, but note that General Headquarters (GHQ) and ISI remain critical "other" voices in contact with militant groups. End Summary.

#### No Deal or Ceasefire

12. (C) During a February 25 meeting with Consulate's senior Special Forces representative, the FC Commander categorically denied that a ceasefire or deal had been struck with Bajaur militants. The government demand is unconditional surrender, he said. FATA ACS conveyed the same points to Principal Officer in a February 24 meeting. The ACS described Faqir Mohammad's announcement of a ceasefire as "unilateral" and due to the pressure that he is under from Frontier Corps.

#### Militants Out of Resources

13. (C) General Tariq commented that the militants are "out of resources" because a number of fighters (NFI) have surrendered. According to the FATA ACS, Faqir Mohammad has been making overtures to the government since the military hit a key cave system in mid/late January. The FATA ACS attributed the timing of the TTP's announcement to operations over the past week or more aimed at the militants stronghold, Mahmoond tehsil, that have put the militants very much on the defensive. Faqir Mohammad, the FATA ACS said, has been offering all sorts of promises not to attack the government.

## "Unconditional Surrender"

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¶4. (C) The FC Commander and the FATA ACS emphasized that the government's key demand is "unconditional surrender." The FATA ACS also noted the government's position of "no amnesty" for those who participated in targeted killings. Faqir Mohammad has been unwilling, however, to surrender himself because "he fears that he will be handed over to the United States." General Tariq commented that those who surrender will go into the "legal process" and be tried. (Note: Both the FC Commander and the FATA ACS have previously expressed concern about the government's ability win convictions and long prison sentences in the settled areas and have noted that even the draconian Frontier Crimes Regulation has its limits.)

## Continuing the Advance

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¶5. (C) General Tariq said that Frontier Corps forces will continue advancing toward the border after a two-day operational pause to reconsolidate. The FC Commander emphasized that this pause should not be misconstrued as a ceasefire or as an extension of government actions in Swat. He acknowledged, however, that some militants may try to evacuate the area during the operational pause.

## Comment

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¶6. (S) The background behind the conflicting information cited in the press reports is unclear. We have no reason to doubt the FC Commander or the FATA ACS, but note that General Headquarters (GHQ) and ISI remain critical "other" voices in contact with militant groups. One observer recalled GHQ's decision last year to ease the blockade pressure off the Mehsud area just as Baitullah Mehsud appeared to be on the ropes -- the 14th Division commander who received the order was General Tariq Khan who has since expressed his unhappiness with that decision.

TRACY